THE AMERICAN

RATIONALIST

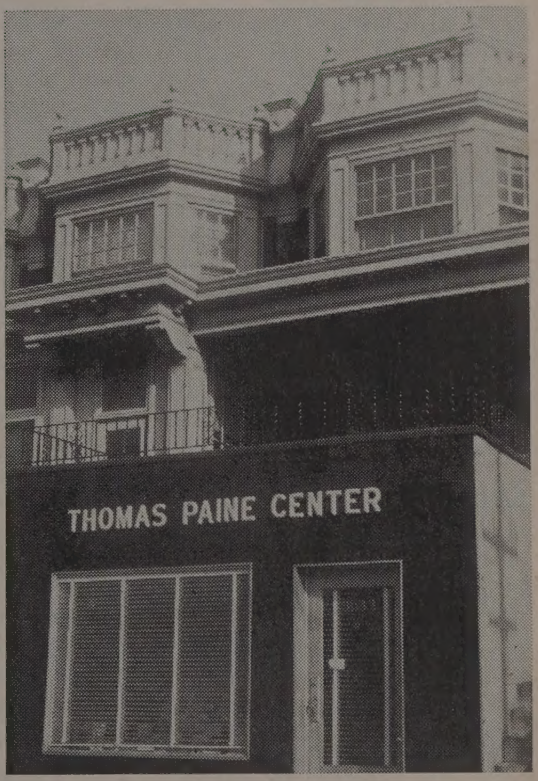
May 1957

VOL. 2 • No. 1

OUR POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY *is best expressed by Alexander Pope in his "Essay on Man": Know then thyself. Presume not God to scan, the proper study of mankind is man."*

NEGATIVELY, *we stand with Jefferson, eternally hostile to all forms of tyranny over the minds of men.*

- **WE BOW AGAIN**
  by Eldon Scholl
- **WORLD UNION OF FREETHINKERS**
  by C. Bradlaugh Bonner, Pres.
- **CATHOLICS AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
  by Edd Doerr
- **SCIENCE**
  by George Fink
- **LET NOT THE PRIESTS BREAK THROUGH!**
  by Bill Parnell
- **JUVENILE DELINQUENCY**
  by Ira D. Cardiff
- **COMMENTS ON CROMWELL SPEECH**
- **OUR FIRST ANNIVERSARY**
  An Editorial



A Magazine for the Entire Rationalist Movement

35c

NEWS OF THE MOVEMENT . . . BOOKS . . . COMMENTS

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO THE AMERICAN RATIONALIST

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Beatrice Gemerek
Sam Hill
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La Liberpensulo
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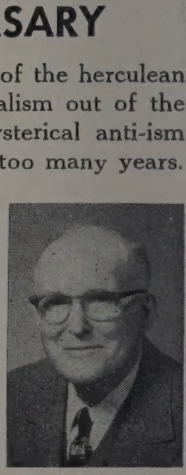
the pic on the cover

THE THOMAS PAINE CENTER, Philadelphia, is the newly acquired center for Freethought and Rationalism in the Eastern part of the country. The Friendship Liberal League purchased the building in September, 1956, for $20,000 and hopes to complete payment by the time of the convention of the American Rationalist Federation which will be held in the building August 24-25. The building houses the offices of the League, its library of several thousand volumes, a reading room and book shop. Public forums are held every Sunday evening. The federation convention will be the first such gathering in Philadelphia for nearly half a century. Visitors are welcome any evening at the center, and especially during the convention in August. The building is located in Philadelphia at 5233 North Fifth Street.

an editorial . . .

OUR FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Here we are at the first anniversary of the herculean task we set for ourselves—to lift Rationalism out of the sterile and altogether useless state of hysterical anti-ism in which it has been bogged down these too many years.



A. B. HEWSON

Our aim has been to develop its constructive aspects as a dynamic, rewarding philosophy of life based largely on one fundamental ethical principle, to quote our own words—"Put into every human relationship a little more than you expect to take out." Application of this principle universally would bring justice and peace to the whole world. This was the platform from which we made our initial appeal in the article, "The Positive Approach", in our first issue.

In our second issue editorial, "Dedicated With Goodwill To All Protestants", we made it clear that while, in our estimation, their Protestantism is obsolete, nevertheless, we, continuing protestants with a small "p", have no particular animus against them. We also expressed willingness to make common cause with them against the steady and stealthy infiltration of Catholic Action into positions of power in the political and educational fields. We confessed in addition that, had we constructively and affirmatively presented the realities to them during the last hundred years instead of sneering and jeering at the fantasies which have bemused them, the Protestants would now be Rationalists like ourselves in solid phalanx with us against the encroachments of a bogus ecclesiastical authority which seeks domination of all the affairs of men.

In this second editorial we also proclaimed the indisputable fact that some form of religion is a basic need for every human being to enable him to live intelligently. We deplored the stubborn blindness of some intellectual anarchists among our fellow Freethinkers who cannot conceive of the word "religion" being stripped of all supernatural and mystical connotations and reduced simply to "a way of life" which yields a maximum of satisfaction to the liver. Unfortunately, some of them react to the word "religion" as the bull does to the cape of the matador. We also avowed our complete acceptance of the moral and ethical principles wrought out of the bitter experience of our fellow men over the generations

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in their efforts to develop a workable orderly society. These principles are not covered by any of the claims of any institutionalized religion but are the common earned property of us all.

Furthermore, we unequivocally acknowledged our atheism in the sense that no concept of Deity so far developed has any special meaning for us. However, we made it plain that atheism is not a philosophy but merely an obsession of the one-track mind involving a lot of useless mental gymnastics and a completely profitless playing with empty words. Knowing, as we do, that all gods have been the products of the human imagination, why should discussion of them serve any conceivable purpose?

In our third editorial, "Let's Organize Our Freedom", we urged the establishment of Rationalist fellowships the country over where Rationalists might benefit from continuous adult education (and who does need it?). There also their children would have the opportunity to receive similar instructions suitable to their age level to keep them from falling back into the mass of

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conformists to orthodoxy letting their elder's progress be lost. The lift which comes from the sense of strength which is inspired by togetherness with co-travelers of the common way is an inestimable reward to be found in close association with our like-minded fellows.

In our fourth editorial, "The Trojan Horse", it was our purpose to present a factual and objective picture of the consistently ruthless and totally amoral outreach for power with no holds barred which has characterized the Roman church down the centuries in its efforts to exercise its pretended mandate from "ON HIGH". We wished to rehearse the facts for our readers' benefit and to make crystal clear our reasons for standing with Jefferson, "eternally hostile to all tyranny over the minds of men."

We considered that with these four editorials we had disclosed reasonably well our pattern of thinking.

We, therefore, began to take up some of the social problems of our day with our fifth editorial, "Juvenile Delinquency". Here we attempted to point up the fact that child rearing is primarily the parents' responsibility and that the school and society in general have only a secondary or emergency role. The present drift toward chaos in this situation still further emphasizes the desperate need for parental education not in the fantasies of outmoded religions but in the techniques of child guidance. This also is further evidence of the great need for Rationalist fellowships in lieu of the churches.

Our last editorial, "Hail The New Reformation" really was no more than an introduction to Arthur Cromwell's speech in St. Stephen's Methodist church in Marblehead, Mass. which, because of the surrounding circumstances, we consider to be the most important event in the area of religion in America in our time. The voice of reality will be heard more and more in the house of tradition and, as at Jericho, with the sound of the trumpets of Truth, the walls of fantasy will come tumbling down.

Before closing this review of our first year, we must offer our hearty thanks to those who have furnished so much stimulating material for our pages and for selfless cooperation of our associates who have backed us financially and rendered dedicated service in this, our great adventure.

We must also gratefully acknowledge the support of our rapidly growing family of subscribers who, rallying to our support, have helped so much to make our better-than-expected progress possible.

We would greatly appreciate comments from all our readers for our future guidance.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

Oh happy, happy birthday!
I'm singing it in verse.
I hope that you'll enjoy it
Though somewhat in reverse.

For I'm a happy one-year-old-
A very healthy kid.
I hope that you are proud of me
And all the work you did.

To help provide the wherewithall
That makes a healthy cub,
I just love the vitamins and calories
Found in each yearly sub.

Now please don't change my diet
And in a year or two,
I'll be a great big fellow
And mighty proud of you.

So I thank you all for what you did,
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And watch me grow this year.

SAM HILL.

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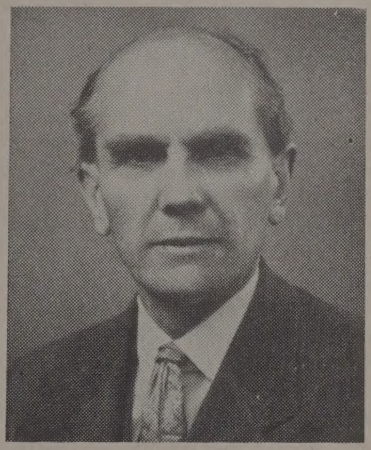
THE WORLD UNION OF FREETHINKERS

by C. BRADLAUGH BONNER, President

There was no permanent machinery for convening international freethought congresses or for bringing together committees of freethinkers to consider international



C. BRADLAUGH BONNER

problems 'till 1880, when the Belgian Federation of Freethinkers and the Dutch Dageraad invited representatives of organized freethought to meet at Brussels with a view to founding such an international organization. This is not to say that international meetings of freethinkers had not been held earlier; they had — there were certainly two in the 1860's, one of which was a challenge to the Eccumenical Council of the Roman Church which met at Rome in 1869-70 and became famous for enacting the infallibility of the Pope in matters theological and moral and for its doctrine of the Supremacy of the Roman Church over the State. The Freethinkers held only one session of their council, and were then banished by the Roman police and retired to Geneva.

Among those who assembled at Brussels in 1880 were D. M. Bennett of U.S.A., Mrs. Besant and Miss Hypatia Bradlaugh of Great Britain; as well as men and women from most western European countries. The

new foundation was first titled **The World Rationalist Federation** but soon became known as **The International Federation of Freethinkers.** Its first home was London where Charles Bradlaugh had established a thriving and efficient National Secular Society with a formidable brigade of speakers and workers. The first secretary was Johannes Schwaagman Darwin, a Dutchman who later became naturalized British. The machinery then consisted of a Secretary and an Executive elected by the congress from members of the society of the country where the office was situated. There was no permanent president; at each congress a President was elected for the period of the congress only. The first congress under the new organization was held in 1881 at London under the presidency of Prof.. Ludwig Buchner, the erudite German author of **Force and Matter** and a personal friend of Bradlaugh. Brussels became the seat of the Federation in 1889 and has remained the center ever since save for the period 1931-33 during which it was at Prague. All the congresses have been held in Europe, except one held at Buenos Aires in 1906. In all there have been thirty-two international conferences; the most outstanding have been those at Rome in 1904, Paris in 1905 and Prague 1936. At the first, not only were the delegates very numerous, over 5000, among whom were to be counted a number of old Garibaldi Redshirts, but the leading speakers were all men of renown and distinction, including the German Professor Ernst Haeckel; the offices of the congress were opposite the Vatican and the publicity immense. It was at this congress that the aims of the International Federation were set out with the greatest clarity, fullness and force. The next year at Paris the attendance was so great as to overwhelm the organization; the main event was a procession to Montmartre where a monument had been erected to the memory of the Chevalier de la Barre an eighteenth century victim of the Church, almost at the door of the, then in building, Sacre Coeur church; the lowest estimate of the participants in this cortege was 100,000.

The 1931 congress at Berlin re-established the link with the German Freethought movement which had grown very powerful, numbering in Germany and Austria, over 600,000 members. Two years later, it fell victim to Hitler; most of its leaders were cast into prison or concentration camps, its funds, which were considerable, seized as far as the Nazis could lay hands on them. However the president, Max Sievers, escaped to Belgium and M. Arnold Boulanger, the Belgian president, ventured into Germany managed to return with the script of the larger part of the German society's funds, which were placed in banks in various countries and have since been used to revive the German Freidenkerverband. In 1936 delegates from the Union of Militant Atheists of Russia were present and agreed to accept the principles of the Federation which include the political neutrality of the international body except in so far as it is itself threatened or that the principles and aims of Freethought are menaced. The Federation then changed its title to the present one of **World Union of Freethinkers.**

I note that in 1912 the Annual published by the Internationl Federation lists societies in the following countries supporting it: Belgium, Great Britain, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Holland, Luxemburg, Germany, Austria, Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Rumania, Greece, Switzerland, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal; China, Japan; South Africa and Madagascar; United States, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay.

The two world wars which have intervened since then have altered the freethought situation considerable and not to the advantage of the international body. Many of the above are either on the wrong side of the "Iron Curtain" or are under Catholic dictators; but there are three countries which now give wholehearted support though not on the 1912 list, viz.. Australia, New Zealand and India.

In fact the World Union survived the last war with the loss of its worldly goods; its 1946 balance was 2 dols 50 on the wrong side.

In 1920 it was decided to elect a permanent president and the first to hold this

office was Dr. Modeste Terwagne, a distinguished Belgian physician and politician, who had been known affectionately as the Bison of the Ardennes on account of his bulk, his curly reddish hair and his powerful rear. The International owed a great debt to this loyal and steadfast man, who in the very difficult period between the two great wars held the International together, maintained its principles and extended its influence. In all this he was greatly aided by Mlle P. H. Pardon who has been honorable secretary since 1925, save for the Prague period, when the secretary was T. Hartwig Terwagne, having taken active part in the resistance to German invaders in both wars, died in January 1945, aged 80. The movement suffered an irreparable loss in the passing of this good and generous man; but its other war losses, particularly by the deaths of Jan Heving, the Dutch president, R. Strivay of Liege and the Treasurer Richard Clerebaut and all those put to death in Italy by Mussolini's blackshirts, in Germany by Hitlers' Brownshirts, in Spain by Franco's Falange and Moors, were all very hard to replace. In almost all the "occupied" countries the movement had to be reconstructed as from the beginning. To help this reconstruction a committee was formed in London composed of representatives of the British Freethought societies and of Freethinking refugees, Belgians, Czechs, Spaniards, French. Nor was the attrition of the Freethought movement to end with the war, for as the "Iron Curtain" descended, it cut off the organizations of Eastern Europe which were progressively suppressed by Stalin; for where "brainwashing" is in fashion, there can be no freedom of thought.

The international committee was reformed and met once again in Brussels in 1946; the first post-war international congress was held in 1949 in Rome as a challenge to the power of the Vatican, no longer walled up and defiant of the civil power as in 1904, but openly flaunting its ability to run both with the Fascist "hounds" and the democratic "hares." Now the Vatican wall has been pulled down and its city is joined with ancient Rome by the Via de Conciliazione (the Way of Conciliation), surely a name pregnant with warning. This congress was illegal as still many Fascist laws were in operation; it was closely watched by the police who attended all meetings and forbade all publicity. Professor Bartalini who organized the Italian side of the Congress lodged the foreign delegates with more than a spice of mischief at the Albergo Minerva, one of the hotels catering for priests and prelates. This congress did much to put the Italian Freethought body, **Giordano Bruno,** which had been violently suppressed by Mussolini with fire and fetters in 1925, once more on its feet, and it is today thriving. Signor Carlo Silvestri who has been a main facto in this risorgimento, has unhappily died quite recently. In 1952 the next congress was held at Brussels, since 1830, when the Belgian kingdom was established, a stronghold of liberal thought. The meetings were held at the great university, the nursery of progressive youth in opposition to the Catholic university of Louvain. The third was held two years ago in the romantic city of Luxemburg. The Grand Duchy is remarkable in that its population is according to statistics 80% Roman Catholic, nevertheless four of its ministers attended our congress; we were received by the mayor and sheriffs of the city as we also were at Dudelinge, the great steel center, and at the martyr city of Vianden; but then our vice-president Maitre Jean Gremling was a leader of the resistance against the invaders. In fact the freethinking minority of the Grand Duchy has a very considerable say in the conduct of public affairs, but it has not yet been found possible to establish a crematorium in the country.

Last summer we held a holiday gathering in Geneva and did honour to Voltaire, the greatest single force for the emancipation of the mind in the eighteenth century and the beneficent seigneur of Ferney.

Next summer an international congress will be held in Paris and we hope to see many of our American brethren there. Please make a note of it, my friends; I should love to shake you by the hand and hear you tell us just how you do things on the other side of the pond.

Catholics And Public Schools

By Edd Doerr

In the March 16th issue of the Jesuit magazine "America", the Rev. Thurston N. Davis, S. J., has sought to "improve the climates which have been a source of tension between the two major branches of Christianity in this country. Father Davis seems to be of the opinion that these "tensions" will be resolved if non-Catholics will only learn and understand the "Catholic" position on such matters as birth control, censorship and parochial schools.

Father Davis then goes on to try to persuade the reader that Catholicism is not really opposed to free secular public education. He says: "Catholics are by no means opposed to our fine American public school system. They support it, just as all sensible American citizens do." But is this really the Catholic position on public schools? I think not, and have no better scource for my opinion than a standard text currently in use in many Catholic colleges and universities: namely, "Moral Guidance", by Rev. Edwin F. Healy, S.J. Father Healy's textbook, which bears the imprimatur of Cardinal Stritch, points out that "Attending schools where there is no teaching of Catholic doctrine is generally injurious to faith and morals." A more vicious "dig" at our public schools would be hard to find. And he goes on to point out that the Catholic student in a non-Catholic school "is apt to be corrupted by the example and teaching of his professors (e.g., by the false views and imprudent discussions in courses on marriage) and by the evil influence of his textbooks and prescribed reading." And as if this were not enough, Father Healy goes on to say that "If Catholic parents actually realized the disastrous influences at work in Non-Catholic schools, they would never think of sending their children into the midst of such dangers."

But to return to Father Davis' attempt to reduce Protestant-Catholic tensions, we find him saying that "very many Catholic parents CHOOSE (implying voluntary action, ED.) to exercise their constitutional right to send their children to other than the common, tax-supported school," and this for the reason that "they seriously and conscientiously want their children to have an education which combines secular learning with religious knowledge." But is the sending of Catholic children to Catholic schools really a matter of choice? I think not, and again we need look only as far as Healy's "Moral Guidance" to find that "The children should be

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sent to a Catholic school, for according to church law (Canon 1374) Catholic children are forbidden to frequent non-Catholic schools, and this prohibition includes grade schools, high schools, colleges, and universities." Healy further enlightens us by saying that "The natural law forbids risking harm to one's faith or morals unnecessarily. Parents would sin grievously if they sent their children to any school or college where there was evidently proximate danger to faith or morals."

What then are we to conclude from this obvious inconsistency? One official Catholic scource praises the public schools and says that Catholics volutarily prefer to send their children to parochial schools, while another equally official source heaps abuse upon the public schools and threatens Catholic parents with eternal damnation if they do not send their children to parochial schools. The explanation is precisely this: officials of the Catholic church adhere to a strict "party line", but suit their public utterances to their particular audiences. The kindly remarks by Father Davis were intended to be presented over a national radio network, while the deprecatory comments of Father Healy were intended only for students in Catholic colleges and universities.

The moral of this "story" is that non-Catholics interested in preserving religious freedom should not be misled by cleverly planned propaganda. Catholicism remains opposed to any educational systems or institutions which do not teach Catholic doctrine. Any apparent deviation from this "party line" is purely for effect.

•

from THE HUMANIST (England):

. . . rationalism means something positive; it must promote reforms and rationalists must say **from experience** how the reforms can be carried out. There is scope for rationalists to undertake this labour in whatever vocation or employment they follow, and only by their doing so can rationalism constantly re-create its vitality, and continue to influence our thoughts and actions.

Zum Ersten Geburtstag unsere

besten Glueckwuensche!

Freie Gemeinde von St. Louis

SCIENCE

by

GEORGE FINK

At the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science December 31, 1956, more excitement was caused by the report of the "Interim Commitee on the Social Aspects of Science" than by any technical report or speech. During the past year this committee made a preliminary study of the present state of science in the US, and its relations to social forces and issues.

The report begins: "The committee found that even a cursory examination of this question leads to a most serious conclusion: That there is an impending crisis in the relationship between science and American society. This crisis is being generated by a basic disparity: At a time when decisive economic, political and social processes have become profoundly dependent upon science, the discipline has failed to attain its appropriate place in the management of public affairs."

The committee noted that scientific activity has been increasing, and society is becoming more and more dependent on science. "In 1930 expenditures for science were estimated at $166 million; in 1953 the amount was more than $5 billion. Allowing for the change in the value of the dollar this represents approximately a fifteen-fold increase in research expenditures over the twenty-three-year period. The number of active scientists in the United States in 1930 was over 46,000; the present number is probably about 250,000 . . . This rate of growth sets scientific activity apart as the second most rapidly expanding sector of our social structure, military activities being first."

The report continues with a detailed discussion of the social forces influencing science, such as the public attitude toward science, the internal situation in science, including the problem of communication between scientific workers in different specialties and in different countries, and the social problems of scientific origin, and gives some conclusions, many of which are worth quoting:

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"Research has placed in human hands the power to influence the life of every person, in every part of the Earth.

"This growth has been stimulated by an intense demand for the practical products of research, especially for military and industrial use. Agencies which use the products of research are willing to provide financial support and other forms of encouragement for science, but show a natural tendency to favor those fields and aspects of science which most nearly relate to their needs.

"The public interest in, and understanding of, science is not commensurate with the importance that science has attained in our social structure. It cannot be said that society provides good conditions for the proper growth of science. The effort to explain the nature of science to the public is slight compared with the public attention now given to other less consequential areas of human activity. Interest in science as a career is so restricted as to cause a serious and worsening personnel situation.

"For reasons such as those just cited, science is experiencing a period of rapid but rather unbalanced growth. Basic research, which is the ultimate source of the practical results so much in demand, is poorly supported, and in the view of some observers lacking in vigor and quality. Areas more remotely connected with industrial and military applications, such as biology and the social sciences, are also not being adequately supported . . . "

"The growth of science and the great enhancement of the degree of control which we now exert over nature has given rise to new social practices, of great scope and influence, which make use of new scientific knowledge. While this advance of science has greatly improved the condition of human life, it has also generated new hazards of unprecedented magnitude. These include: the dangers to life from widely disseminated radiation, the burden of man-made chemicals, fumes and smogs of unknown biological effect which we now absorb, large-scale deterioration of our natural resources and the potential of totally destructive war. The determination that scientific knowledge is to be used for human good, or for purposes of destruction is in the control of social agencies. For such decisions, these agencies and ultimately the people themselves, need to be aware of the facts and the probable consequences of action. Here scientists can play a decisive role: they can bring the facts and their estimates of the results of proposed actions before the people."

The committee ends its report with a call for action: "The need for action is serious and immediate. Consider

the situation relating to the biological hazards of radiation. It is now six months since the radiation committee of the National Academy of Sciences issued a report that called for a series of immediate actions . . .

"There is no evidence that these urgent pleas for action have yet met with any significant response. Clearly, this is a matter that requires the persistent attention of all scientists. It exemplifies the pressing need that scientists concern themselves with social action."

"In this situation, the A.A.A.S. carries a special responsibility. As one of our past presidents, Warren Weaver, has said: 'If the A.A.A.S. is to be a vigorous force for the betterment of science, it cannot continue in the face of crucial situations with closed eyes and a dumb mouth.' This responsibility has already been recognized. What is needed now is a way to meet it."

While some scientific organizations such as the Federation of American Scientists and the Society for Social Responsibility in Science, have been concerned about the social consequences of the work of scientists, the major all-including organizations of science, the AAAS, has traditionally been "isolationist", holding the view that scientists should stick to their specialties and not be concerned with social consequences. That attitude now seems to be passing. The AAAS Council accepted the report and called for appointment of a larger commitee to continue the study and report to the Board of Directors.

Rationalists can be glad that the AAAS is becoming concerned about the social effects of science, and note with interest and approval that their recommendations for action do not include recourse to prayer or other supernatural agency. One important social force acting on science which is not mentioned in the report, and should be of great interest to all scientists is the religious interference with science teaching, especially in the matter of organic evolution. This interference is impressively described by Dr. Oscar Riddle in "The Unleashing of Evolutionary Thought" (reviewed in May, 1956, issue of AMERICAN RATIONALIST). Scientists are rationalists in their technical work, if they are good scientists, and they need to learn to apply the scientific method outside of their laboratories.

•

FREETHOUGHT GEMS FROM MARK TWAIN

God's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn.—*(Mark Twain's Notebook)*

Man is kind enough when he is not excited by religion.
—*(The Mysterious Stranger)*

RATIONALIST ORGANIZATIONS

The purpose of this column is to list all known rationalist, secularist and Freethought organizations that are democratically functioning in their area and which we can recommend to our readers. We like our friends to affiliate with local societies no matter under whose particular auspices they operate.

ARIZONA

ARIZONA SECULARISTS, U. S. A., P.O. Box 893, Phoenix, Arizona.

CALIFORNIA

FREETHINKERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, Mr. Kolen, 2624 Maple Ave., Los Angeles, California.

SAN DIEGO, CALIF.

San Diego Freethinkers meet every Sunday at 8 p.m. at 933 9th Ave., San Diego, Calif.

DENVER, COLORADO

JEFFERSON PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF COLORADO, Dr. Theodore Schreiber, 1904 S. St. Paul Ave., Denver 10, Colorado.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION CHICAGO CHAPTER, 615 Davis Street, Evanston, Ill.

PIONEERS OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT, meet second Sunday of month, T. G. Masaryk School, 5701 W. 22nd Place, Cicero, Ill., 8 P.M.

FREISINNIGE GEMEINDE, Joe Braun, 3541 W. North Ave., Chicago 47, Ill.

CZECHOSLOVAK CONGREGATION OF FREETHINKERS, 4236 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago 23, Ill.

CHICAGO CHAPTER CRFA, 4236 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago 23, Ill.

CICERO CHAPTER CRFA, 5701 West 22nd Place, Cicero, Ill.

THOMAS PAINE CHAPTER NO. 2 CRFA., 4236 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago 23, Ill.

CZECH RATIONALIST FEDERATION OF AMERICA, 4236 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago 23, Ill.

BOHEMIAN FREETHINKERS SCHOOLS OF CHICAGO, 2548 S. Homan Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.

NEW YORK

INGERSOLL FORUM, meets second Friday of month, 8 p.m. at the Pythian 70th St., east of Broadway, New York City.

LEAGUE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, 20 East 100th St., New York 29, N. Y.

NEW YORK CZECH RATIONALISTS Frank Hrbek, 4512 Liberty Ave., North Bergen, New Jersey.

MICHIGAN
MICHIGAN LIBERAL LEAGUE, 23034 Donald, East Detroit, Michigan.

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
RATIONALIST SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

GERMAN SCHOOL ASS'N. AND FREE COMMUNITY OF N. ST. LOUIS, INC., 2218 St. Louis Ave.

AMERICAN RATIONALIST FEDERATION, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

CLEVELAND, OHIO
CLEVELAND CZECH RATIONALISTS, Anton Belsan, 5149 Fowler, Cleveland 7, Ohio.

YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO
AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION, Box 227, Yellow Springs, Ohio.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA.
Contact: John H. Latta, Box 10 W Warr Acres Branch, Oklahoma City, Okla.

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
FRIENDSHIP LIBERAL LEAGUE, 5233 No. Fifth St., Philadelphia 20, Pa.

TULSA, OKLAHOMA
Contact: Ronald Pesha, 1930 East 33rd Place, Tulsa 5, Oklahoma.

TEXAS
CONGREGATION OF CZECH RATIONALISTS, 309½ E. 29th St., Houston, Tex.

WISCONSIN
FREIE GEMEINDE, Jefferson Hall, 2617 West Fond du lac Ave., Milwaukee 6, Wisconsin.

JEFFERSON FREETHOUGHT SOCIETY, 2617 West Fond du lac Ave., Milwaukee 6, Wisconsin.

WASHINGTON
SEATTLE SECULARIST SOCIETY, Mr. J. C. Leider, 5327 Fountain Street, Seattle, Washington.

CANADA
VICTORIA HUMANIST FELLOWSHIP, Dr. Marian Sherman, 2901 Sea View Drive, Victoria, B. C., Canada.

■

FLORIDA RATIONALIST SOCIETY
OREGON RATIONALIST SOCIETY
IOWA RATIONALIST SOCIETY
WASHINGTON RATIONALIST SOCIETY
OHIO RATIONALIST SOCIETY
Temporary headquarters:
Org. Committee American Rationalist Federation, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Missouri.

■

Readers who desire contacts with other Freethinkers in their area are invited to write the Organizing Committee of the American Rationalist Federation, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Missouri.

ELDON SCHOLL

WE BOW AGAIN

A year ago we launched a new magazine. In our introductory editorial, "**We Make Our Bow,**" we told what we hoped to do for our readers.

Did the AMERICAN RATIONALIST fulfill its promises?

We said this magazine would be a channel for ideas, problems and solutions that would further the movement. We published original articles we thought would help stimulate more interest in the movement, such as **"Where Are Our Reserves?", "Atheism Outmoded"** and **"Let's Organize Our Freedom."** We will continue to promote the philosophy of Rationalism and to bring it, as we said, before the orthodox and Rationalist alike. This recalls such articles directed to liberal non-Rationalists, such as **"Whose Language Are We Talking?", "By Their Fruits," "On God's Coattails," "The Secular "Menace,"** and **"Why I Do Not Believe in a God."**

We said that we would go back into the history of the movement. We begin on that subject with a background on the World Union of Freethinkers. We showed our "broad-mindedness" in quoting from every English language Freethought publication we know. We will begin to quote from many in foreign languages.

We wanted to "show you what existing organizations are doing today, what individual Freethinkers are doing . . . " The regular column, "The Wide,Wide Movement," with the important American and world news condensed into several pages, has brought more news of organized activity than any other publication with the possible exception of the British paper **The Freethinker.** Most American Freethought publications, with the exception of **The Liberal,** are closed to any mention of other papers or organizations either by policy or neglect.

On our cover we state that AR is "A Magazine for the Entire Movement." And we mean it. Our readers have expressed surprise and complete approval of our policy of representing the entire movement and not just a section of it. We hope, by doing this, to promote enthusiasm and active participation—another of our promises. Many readers have expressed a desire to organize their areas. We are always willing to cooperate in such projects. We have been successful in reviving the active interest of many individuals who had been disillusioned with the movement in the past and have returned now

because of AR's fresh and vigorous attempt to counteract the apathy of the past few years.

AR is not a one-man magazine but is produced by a staff who really handle their own departments.

We believe we have fulfilled our promises and have brought together a fine staff that can and will give you a magazine which satisfies the need of both organized and individual Rationalists for a sense of togetherness.

Reread our first editorial, look over the seven issues and decide for yourself. With the help of all our readers, we can continue to improve AR and the "new era of Freethought and Rationalist activity."

We bow to our readers who have made AR possible. We have proved our sincerity. We hope all readers will give their answer by writing us their opinions of the magazine, their criticism, and their renewals.

■

"quotus

from the Freethought publications of the world

from THE RATIONALIST (South Africa):

I passionately affirm that secular living can draw on a bounty so rich and varied that direct and vicarious experience of only a sample of it is possible.

from DER FREIDENKER (Germany): It is the pride of the Christians to be Christians — not human beings.

from THE AGE OF REASON MAGAZINE:

To say that a man cannot be good without God, is like saying that sensible folks cannot be generous without Santa Claus.

from SECULAR SUBJECTS:

It sounds nice to talk about doing something about conditions as long as you are never going to carry them out.

from VOICE OF FREEDOM (Das Freie Wort):

People scarcely bother to think about anything anymore. They get their thoughts neatly packaged for them on the radio, on television and in the press and all that is necessary is to take off the wrappings and use according to directions. If anyone doubts that this is the case, just try asking a number of people what they think about any big event, one will find that there is practically no difference of opinion on any subject.

from THE LIBERAL:

The believers relying on God's or the Savior's help, do not fully develop their own strength and are therefor less steadfast in their principles; thus they fail sooner to temptations. Yet the representatives of religion and all the rest of the believers maintain, that it is religion, that keeps man back from evil.

LET NOT THE PRIESTS . . . BREAK THROUGH

(Ex. XIX, 24)

Greetings, friends and fellow members of AR! Herewith a new column—moved, as you can see by divine inspiration, enters these pages. So let us proceed to "open the book and loose the seals thereof".

In this—as in many issues—we shall be concerned primarily with Congressional action. — We shall attempt to report all the more flagrant violations (or prospective violations)—and as many as possible of the minor violations — which may result from Congressional action.

Perhaps it would be best to now define our stand on this. We hold that our U. S. Constitution demands ABSOLUTE separation of Church and State, and that therefore any monetary payment, contribution — or subsidy to any church or religious body—or to any affiliate thereof—constitutes a legal violation of Church-State separation as defined by our U.S. Constitution and its Bill of Rights! We also define as such a violation any legal right or privilege granted the afore-mentioned parties that will give them any legal power in government—(national, state, or local) or in diplomatic action. FREEDOM OF OR FROM WORSHIP according to the dictates of the INDIVIDUAL desire is the ONLY legal right granted in regard to religion by the U. S. Constitution. As far as we are concerned, "this is the law; all else is commentary".

Now, in presenting our information, please note that any bill listed as beginning with the letter "H" (such as H.R. 29, or H.J. Res 15) is a bill introduced in the House of Representatives, while bills listed as beginning with the letter "'S" (such as S. 21) have been introduced in the U. S. Senate. Any U. S. citizen has the right to obtain from his Senator or Representative a copy of any bill before the Congress or passed by Congress and signed into law, so do not hesitate to write for copies of bills whenever you

feel that your interest is valid. Don't abuse — BUT USE — the privilege!

First, we report that **H. J. Res. 128** has been introduced by Rep. Siler of Kentucky. This is the infamous "Christian Amendment" to our U. S. Constitution which, if it becomes law, would constitute a reign of Christian fascism unrivalled by the work of Stalin, Hitler or Torquemada! Most liberal and freethought publications have informed their readers concerning this "Amendment" during the past year—space prohibits us from commenting further on it at the moment. This bill is now in the House Judiciary Committee.

S. 259 (Potter, Mich) would demand the issuance of a special postage stamp in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Knights of Columbus (To Commitee on Post Office and Civil Service).

H. R. 605 (Chenoweth, Col.) and **H. R. 610** (Derounian, N. Y.) would exempt churches from the excise tax on bowling alleys, billiard and pool tables (To Ways and Means). We all know how very necessary to religious worship are bowling alleys, pool and billiard tables. A very worthy bill indeed!

H. Con. Res. 4 (Becker, N.Y.) and **H. Con. Res. 33** (Smith — Miss.) would require the United Nations and similar world organizations in which the U. S. is a member to be opened with prayer (To Foreign Affairs). These good Christians backing this bill would "go out and compel them to come in."

H. J. Res. 92 (Sadlak, Conn.) would proclaim Sunday, June 23, 1957, and the fourth Sunday in June of each year thereafter, as a day of prayer "for the man and woman in white" (To the Judiciary).

H. R. 152 (Dingell, Mich.) — would designate St. Ann's churchyard in N. Y. as a national shrine (To Interior and Insular Affairs).

H. J. Res. 1029 (Zablocki, Wis.) would declare Good Friday a public Holiday (To the Judiciary).

We have much more information

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4 for .50
The Positive Approach, A. B. Hewson ..... 3 for .10
35 for 1.00
Let's Organize Our Freedom, A. B. Hewson .....3 for .10
35 for 1.00
Hail to Rationalism, Marius Hansome .....2 for .05
50 for 1:00
The Monkey's Viewpoint—a humorous poem .....each .01
Juvenile Delinquency, A. B. Hewson ..... 3 for .10
35 for 1.00
By their fruits . . ., Ira D. Cardiff ..... .15
4 for .50
Why I do not believe in God, Arthur Cromwell ..... .20
3 for .50

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2218 ST. LOUIS AVENUE ST. LOUIS 6, MISSOURI

CONVENTIONAL LIES ABOUT JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

By Ira D. Cardiff

Some conventional lies with which juveniles are confronted: These moss-covered canards are:

1) that juveniles are more delinquent than adults,
2) that "bad boys" are numerous, and many are incorrigible,
3) that, while it is eminently fitting and proper for adults to poison themselves with nicotine, caffeine, alcohol, etc., it is quite immoral for a juvenile to do so,
4) that to spare the rod spols the child,
5) that many, if not most, people are dishonest,
6) that "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Genesis 8:21),
7) that attendance of Sunday school and church will improve the morals of a delinquent,
8) that there is such a thing as original sin,
9) that the youth should be kept in the dark in regard to sex until marriage.
10) that there is a Hell to which most people go,
11) that there is a Heaven where "few are chosen",
12) that baptism and circumcision will produce some magic improvement of morals,
13) that our "godless" public schools are responsible for juvenile delinquency,
14) that non-white races are responsible for much of our juvenile delinquency,
15) that most juvenile delinquents come from divorced parents,
16) that much of our juvenile delinquency originates in transient families,
17) that children are being taught democracy by their parents (they are instead taught autocracy, or a combination of autocracy and theocracy),
18) that the environment of the average American family is ideal for the juvenile,
19) that the juvenile has sufficient sense to handle a high-speed vehicle upon the highway at age 16,
20) tat at age 18 he is wise enough to found a family, but the discerning age of 21 is necessary to participate in choosing a second-rate lawyer to fill a stateman's job.

These are all conventional lies of our crude thinking — or crude efforts at thinking. Further, without his consent, the juvenile is baptised and circumcised, his

of this sort to report, but must wait 'til space permits.

We can give specific information on where to find these bills listed in the Congressional Record if desired. Where demand for this information is occasional we will answer queries individually, and where many demands occur, information will be published in our column.

Bill Parnell.

•

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

It has been said— "You cannot please everybody."

That is true. But it is not a case of pleasing anybody at all. It is a case of presenting the truth; the real, which promotes the existence and progress of all.

Soren Dahl.

•

A preacher recently announced there are 726 sins. He is now being besieger by requests for the list by people who think they're missing something.

—Re-Saw

•

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

to the

AMERICAN RATIONALIST

•

JACOB P. HOFMANN

•

DON R. JACKS

U. S. Committee Against Militarization

B. D. Mallery

Howard Darrow

Russell Luchsinger

John Welnhofer

Robert D. Spencer, M.D.

Rudolph L. Marchfield

Herman Roth

Arthur Jensen

Donald E. Henshaw

I've enjoyed the new magazine and the new movement.

I haven't felt ashamed to show this magazine to anyone and I have so felt with another publication. Its cartoons I especially did not like because of their messages. The ones for AR have been better.

I was pleased to read Florence Van Swearengen's letter to "Coronet". I urge more of this sort of thing. A tastefully presented argument to a particular person or magazine. Could we ask the officers to do this more often? Could we send in a double-spaced draft of a proposed letter to have it polished to suit and sent out with official status? Some of these should make the "Letters to the Editor" column and let the people know that we are intellectually respectable.

D. E. Henshaw, R.I.

■

I must say that THE AMERICAN RATIONALIST fulfills an important need with its wide range of material . . .

— danny pezze —

■

Dear Sirs:

I received your magazine, THE RATIONALIST today and must offer my thanks. It seems to hit the nail on the head on many issues and although some form of "do gooders" may someday attempt to ban your magazine, I hope that it will be able, should that occasion arise, to stay in circulation.

Clarence Bailey, Rochester.

■

Our good friend, Dr. Adolphe de Castro, one time American Consul at Madrid and in his ninety-eighth year, writes us on his typewriter, "Having read with increasing pleasure No. 6 of the mind is forcibly indoctrinated with various and sundry isms, dogmas and superstitions; in other words, he is forced to become a Baptist, a Campbellite or a Catholic, not according to his wishes, the dictates of logic or good pedagogy, but according to the prejudices and predelictions of parent or pastor, both of whom may be thoroughly incompetent. He is thus frequently seriously handicapped for life. If a juvenile violates a sexual convention or taboo, he is unbalanced, and no realistic defense on his part will be listened to, nor will any adult dare defend him.

If he is unfortunate enough to be a natural child, and enjoying the blessings of a Christian community, he is stigmatized, branded with infamy for life, as are all of his descendents for ten generations.

He is the subject of numerous prayers and supplications to the only true god, but, since these prayers are not answered, the juvenile delinquent can **only** conclude that either he is already "lost", an outcast, or that there is no god.

■

from THE HUMANIST (England):

Scepticism is not the end but the beginning of the venture.

BEST WISHES

for Many Years of Progress

Rationalist Society of St. Louis

The Executive Committee of the CZECHOSLOVAK RATIONALIST FEDERATION of AMERICA

congratulates the

AMERICAN RATIONALIST

in giving the American Rationalist Movement the best in literature, true fellowship, and understanding. May you enjoy many, many happy birthdays, yet to come . . .

VICTOR CEJKA, President

V. MINIBERGER, Secretary

EXCELLENT "RATIONALIST" YOU WERE GOOD ENOUGH TO SEND ME, I must say that the material in it is of exceptional interest to me as a freethinker".

•

"Arthur G. Cromwell's "Why I Do Not Believe In A God" is one of the finest statements by any man to appear in a long time.

St. Stephen's Methodist Episcopal Church, Marblehead, Mass., is to be commended for such an act of courage in allowing an Atheist to speak .

Surely, it will usher in the New Reformation.

It is regretable that such an occasion was not more widely published in the papers; it would have made many think—deeply, clearly, understandingly.

Many, many, rousing cheers to the AR for printing it in full!

Quite a lot was learned by this Atheist that can be of use in the future.

Cromwell's arguments were sober, clear and humane as well."

Danny Pezze, N.Y.C.

•

I have found the publication to be very enlightening and well written.

It is refreshing and inspiring to read something I can believe in.

Charles A. Cadmano, Illinois.

•

It is most praiseworthy that a journal of so high a standard can be produced by volunteer workers. I like your international outlook and your efforts for unity within the movement.

L. Hanger, England.

Science and the Supernatural

by A. J. Carlson

Order from

AMERICAN RATIONALIST

2218 St. Louis Ave. St. Louis 6, Mo.

FRED ROSENBERG

LET US REASON TOGETHER

Part I

A man who cannot reason is but the shell of a man!
For like an unbending Oak a storm shall lay him low!
Reason is to a man like sap is to a tree and all else that grows.
Show me a man or woman that cannot abide reason and I will show you one that is dying but does not know it!
I sat me down with my friends on a campus lawn
And we did reason together from dusk until the breaking dawn.
And like our friend Walt Whitman we plucked our blades of grass
And we wondered and we pondered at all that in review did pass!
We searched for the wheres and the why fors and we closely questioned one another
We agreed and disagreed for were we not sisters and brothers?
We searched into the past until the very dawn of time, —
For the riddle of the universe and the music that ever rhymes!
Nothing was so precious and sacred that it could not be discussed
All that did come of man did feel the rapier of reason's thrust!
Searched we well the religions that man did live by
And through all the histories that did make man die
And this lesson we did learn and we learned it very well, —
That in the end man alone did make his Heaven and his Hell!
That the promises of mans' faith was small indeed
No matter what the dogma, — no matter what the creed!
That man could be a 'man' if he but would only try!
That the religions that man did profess though different they did seem
If they would but know, in truth were but superstitions and just dreams.
Alike they had their hopes and fears; their bitterness and petty means
Their whinings and their boastings; their groanings and their roastings and their bitter little schemes!
Many and rare were the thoughts we did express
Of love and life and beauty and of that which man calls death!
Ever searching; — ever striving!
Ever longing; — ever rising!

Our Foreign Correspondent

A recent and live-wire addition to the Freethought movement in England, Dave Shipper, twenty-nine years old, was born in Yarmouth and brought up in Manchester. Because of the common-sense attitude of his parents he was withdrawn from religious instruction in school. Unless a child is specifically withdrawn, and they seldom are, all children receive religious instruction.

DAVE SHIPPER

After curiosity-satisfying visits to Sunday School he became a sceptic at an early age. Evacuated from Manchester after an early bombing in the war years he was conscripted into the Army at 18 and spent two years in Germany.

He is an all-around sportsman, played football and ran cross-country for the Rhine Army, was divisional table-tennis champion; played for the Army basketball team in inter-services tournament. He served with the Royal Signals and was placed in the Interpreter Pool, becoming the only Englishman with the Norwegian Brigade. He has been in show business and is a commercial photographer.

He now serves as the official "contact man" for the National Secular Society, founding the Wales and Western Branch and writing for **The Freethinker.** He has undertaken a self-imposed job of contacting the nmerous Freethought organizations throughout the world, a continually growing list.

Mr. Shipper is almost six feet tall, weighs 175 pounds. He likes dancing (holds medals in contests as evidence of a mis-spent youth, he says), likes life, and his interest is furthering international Freethought relations. As the European correspondent for **The American Rationalist,** he has already sent about a hundred pages of Freethought news and comments! With a very good sense of humor (or humour, shall we say?) this young man should be marked by all organizations as the type needed for the movement. Would that there be a dozen like him in every country in the world!

•

GHANA: THE NEXT ACT

On you, the actors, I will waste no praise:
You struggled, suffered... and, at last you win.
This, Prison Graduates of former days,
Is not the end. **This is where you begin.**

They watch you—people bitter and oppressed,
The millions landless in their native land;
Each crisis is a Continental test—
Ghana, all Africa is in your hand.

The crushed Kikuyu, perjured to condone
By a false loyalty a slavish peace,
Rumours your triumph, half-discerns his own,
Your destiny the key to his release.

They watch you. In the segregated kirk
Where a White God is worshipped by the Boers
They pray that He will never let it work—
This hated thing, this freedom which is yours.

Here Strijdom's arguments are powerless—
Prison and thuggery and gun and whip—
His hope is faction, fraud or foolishness:
All that he fears in you is statesmanship!

We watch you, all of us—your many friends,
Your enemies, prepared to gloat and jeer.
On with the play. Each partisan attends—
Their fear our hope, their hope our only fear.

REGINALD REYNOLDS

THE WIDE, WIDE MOVEMENT

All organizations are urged to send in their news, programs, activities, elections, socials, past or future, and pictures of meetings, officers or members, or anything of interest to Rationalists.

Joseph Lewis, President of the FREETHINKERS OF AMERICA announced that an attorney has been retained to handle the case of the school teacher in Miami who had been assigned a position but because he had written a letter to a newspaper concerning the subject "Religion in the Public Schools," the University of Miami dubbed him a "fanatic" and that to be a teacher he had to believe in God. Contributions to support the court case may be sent to the FREETHINKERS OF AMERICA, 370 West 35th Street. New York 1, N. Y.

The JEFFERSON FREE THOUGHT SOCIETY of Milwaukee presented moving pictures of the Bahama Islands and a talk by the curator of the Milwauke Public Museum William Dickinson. In another program Leonard S. Zubrensky, a Milwaukee attorney and representative of the American Civil Liberties Union talked about the problems in civil liberties and the past accomplishments of the A.S.L.U. A recent program included the president of the Freie Gemeinde, William O. Becher, who reviewed Emmet McLaughlin's book **People's Padre.**

THE LIBERAL magazine has offered $5,000 reard for any faith healer who can heal two persons who are believers. The judges will be the cancer case and the paralytic who have tried all known medical aids as well as naturopathic cures.- No inquiries have as yet been made by so-called "faith healers."

The FRIENDSHIP LIBERAL LEAGUE, of Philadelphia presented the following programs: Prof. Donald G. Baker talking on **Faith of a 20th Century Quaker,** Dr. Philip Mayer on **Science and Religion,** Kenneth M. Whitten on **If Thomas Paine were Alive Today** and an open forum on evolution. Meetings are held every Sunday at 7:30 PM, at the Thomas Paine Center, 5233 N. Fifth Street. Philadelphia, Pa.

The RATIONALIST SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS presented Mr. Buford Posey from Mississippi who spoke on the subject of race relations in the South. In another program David Norton spoke on**Can Art Contribute to Purposeful Living?** At the annual meeting of the Society the membership elected Eugene Hoffman, Chairman; James Kaigler, Vice-Chairman; Eldon Scholl, Secretary; Norma Scholl, Treasurer; Sam Hill, Recording Secretary; Arnold Safron, Librarian; and George Falgier, Director. Meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 8:00 PM at 2218 St. Louis Avenue, St. Louis 6, Mo.

The annual Convention of the AMERICAN RATIONALIST FEDERATION will be held Auust 24—25 at the Thomas Paine Center, 5233 North Fifth Street, PhPiladelphia, PPa. Visitors are invited to attend. Copies of the revised Constitution were mailed to all affiliating organizations and copies may be obtained by those interested in starting new groups in their areas by writing to the federation at 2218 St. Louis Avenue, St. Louis 6, Mo.

At the Annual Conference of the AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION in Cincinnati Dr. Hermann J. Muller, President spoke on **Freedom from Ignorance,** and Dr. Chauncey Leake spoke on **Science, Humanism, and Ethics** among other speeches and many workshop meetings.

The 50th American Ethical Union National Assembly was held May 1—5 in Cleveland, Ohio at the Carter Hotel.

The PIONEERS OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT publish their own monthly magazine, the SECULARIST. It is only a mimeographed job, limited, but reflects in its pages the activities of the PIONEERS who are affiliated also in the American Rationalist Federation. If anybody is interested to get a sample copy of the SECULARIST and learn what the PIONEERS are doing, write to them. (See listings of Organizations elsewhere in this magazine).

FOREIGN NEWS

By Dave Shipper

The premier social function of the year, the Annual Dinner-Dance of the NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY of England, was held in February at the Mecca Cafe. The President, F. A. Ridley, introduced the guest-of-honor, Mr. H. C. Blackham, Secretary of the British Ethical Union who spoke about the proposed merger of the Ethical Union with the Rationalist Press Ass'n. He said that each had their part to play and nothing could be better than their cooperation. Other speakers were Mr. G. A. Kirk, President of Leicester Secular Society (oldest in the world), Adrian Pigott, author of **Freedom's Foe — The Vatican** (now being translated into Spanish) and Mr. A. R. Williams, of Worcester. Over 100 guests included some from the United States, Spain, Italy and Czechoslovakia.

Another social evening in London was provided by the HUMANIST COUNCIL which comprises

the Ethical Union, South Place Ethical Society, The Rationalist Press Association, and the National Secular Society.

A group of British Esperantists met in London and inaugurated the BRITA LIBERPENSULA ESPERANTISTA ASOCIO, which is affiliate to the British Etdical Union. Aims are to propagate instruction of the international auxiliary language, Esperanto, among Freethinkers as well as the knowledge of Freethought. American Esperantists may send messages of greetings to Secretary G. Dickinson, 21 Gribble Road, Liverpool 10, Lancashire, England.

After their annual congress held in Wiesbaden the committee on the BUNDES FREIRELIGIÖSE GEMEINDE DEUTSCHLANDS announced that their magazine **Geistesfreiheit** is to combine with **Freies Menschentum** and **Sicht und Weg** and the new journal is to be named **Der Freireligiöse.**

The LEAGUE AGAINST RELIGIOUS COMPULSION in Israel has 2000 members. The chairman is Professor S. Goldelman.

The FINNISH FREETHOUGHT UNION is an amalgamation of 47 branches spread throughout Finland with a membership over 7500. The Union is affiliated with the World Union of Freethinkers. Judge Väinö Voipio has lectured on such subjects as **Morals and Religion, Sad Aspects of Christianity, Society's Pressure on Freethinkers** and **Evidence of Theologians.** The branches run study circles and help distribute the union's monthly magazine **Vapaa Ajattelija** (Free Thinker) which is one of the best-produced Freethought magazines in the world. Works by Ingersoll had been translated as early as the beginning of this century. The last two chairmen who passed away recently were V. T. Aaltonen, a professor of chemistry and forestry, and Y. Ruutu, professor of political science.

A discussion group of Polish atheist intellectuals has been founded in Warsaw. The founders pointed out that the Polish Freethinkers were unlawfully disbanded by the Stalinist regime and that atheists should again have the right of free expression. They want to contact other atheist groups in Poland and to prepare a national conference to set up again the former FREETHINKERS' ASSOCIATION. Of 108,000 school children in Warsaw only 19,000 do not have scripture instruction and the Association for Secular Schools has been founded of teachers, parents and social workers to see that at least one school in every Warsaw district should be without scripture lessons and that religious symbols and practices banned.

THE WORLD UNION OF FREETHINKERS will hold a Paris Congress from September 6th to 10th. The new statue to the Chevalier de la Barre will be unveiled on the slope of Montmartre and a public meeting will be held at the Salle Saunier rue Cadet. The discussion theme will be **Overpopulation, Religion and Freethought.** Bertrand Russell is President.

THE AMERICAN RATIONALIST FEDERATION appointed Mr. Lowell H. Coate as a national organizer and traveling representative. Mr. Coate, well known for his past association with the Rationalist movement, has already visited several areas in the country and has contacted numerous Rationalists. While his schedule is not definite, any Rationalist who would welcome a visit from the ARF representative should write to the federation headquarters and be placed on file for future reference so that schedules may be arranged to Mr. Coate's advantage.

On March 10th the NEW ZEALAND RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION took a ferry launch trip and help a picnic at the Rangitoto Picnic Grounds. The annual dinner and one-day conference on Rationalism was also held.

Dr. Raghunath Paranjpye gave the speech of welcome as Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Fifth Annual Convention of the INDIAN RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION held in Bombay. In a concise statement of the problems of a secular state such as India he said, "All problems that are at present before the country and, perhaps, even before the world, will, to my mind, become easier of solution if they are subjected to purely rational consideration. Man is burdened with vast accretions handed down by history and tradition, by prejudices and prepossessions which have been inherited during countless generations. Although we canot get rid of all this burden, in a moment, the rationalist must try, as far as possible, to get rid of what is worse in this bequest of the past and seek to preserve and improve what is better . . . In some countries, even in the west, there is a kind of counter movement away from rationalism . . . And even in our country the intense reverence that we are asked to pay to anything that is old, the increasing vogue of many obscurantist sects, the suprarational authority claimed for most of our sacred writings, all show that the work of rationalists in India is stupendous and can hardly be said to have yet begun.

In Switzerland the FREIGEISTIGEN VEREINIGUNG DER SCHWEIZ held their Annual Conference on March 16-17th in the Hotel Du-Pont Weitenkeller Lucerne. The Vereinigung's monthly magazine **Freidenker** is now in its 40th year of publication and the various branches pursue an active program.

In March Proessor Dr. Gerhard von Frankenberg, President of the DEUTSCHEN VOLKS-

BUNDES FÜR GEISTESFREIHEIT, took a tour which will take him to Australia to visit with the Rationalists there. Since he will be absent a year his work will be dealt with by Albert Heuer and Professor Rudolf Genschel.

In Wales, the WALES AND WESTERN BRANCH of the NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY had a visit from General Secretary Colin McCall who lectured on **The B.B.C. and Atheism.** The N.S.S President, F. A. Ridley also visited Wales and lectured before the group.

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COMMENTS ON CROMWELL SPEECH

As you know, I had some copies stenciled and sent them out to some of my closer friends, and I have received most flattering response. Just as your own was so exciting and spontaneous when you first received it, just so have been the others. Frank Newton of Clarksville 3, Ark., write and I quote, "I note with a keen sense of appreciation your gifted prose that reads like poetry. Your power of expression is undeniably great and I admire the heights your thoughts have ascended.

"Without question, your argument is one of the most powerful I have ever read. Your timing, eloquence leave nothing to be desired. You must have made a deep impression upon your listeners." I had never met this man before. Frank Hughes ("The Pope of the Bad Lands") of Minneapolis, sent this Newton the copy I had sent him, and the above were the completely unsolicited reactions.

Curt Muller wrote me that he had sent my speech all around his relations here in America and now it was in Germany going the rounds. Ira Cardiff and Robert Harold Scott from the West Coast sent me very flattering compliments. Here is one from an old friend, son of a Lutheran minister — "very interesting and you have certainly had some success in presenting it. I will not attempt to analyze or appraise it, except to say that it is a logical and well-reasoned thesis: also that I was impressed by the restraint and tolerance you exhibit throughout, especially by the conclusion. I am rereading parts of it tonight." Here is a quote from Dr. Charles Francis Potter of New York: "Your address WHY I DO NOT BELIEVE IN GOD was received and carefully read and reread today and I am dropping rush work of deadline pressure to write you that in my opinion you hape done a splendid piece of composition and presentation which deserves permanent printed form, either as a booklet or magazine piece. The temper and style of the address, its concise structure and absence of padding and repetition, and its admirable covering of the subject, plus your canny audience-rapport and empathy, place it far above the usual atheistic soap-bo(ranting which alienates more people than it convinces. If you can spare, at cost price, four or five copies, I'd like to hand them personally to persons I expect to meet shortly."

Here is a bit of what Harold R. Rafton had to say, "You have handled the matter very skillfully in presenting the subject to a religious audience. While they were listening, I have a suspicion that except for the fanatics you must have raised doubt in the minds of many, which cannot but bear fruit in breaking them away from the orthodox viewpoint as time goes on. I hope you get many more opportunities to deliver the same address, as I am sure it will be greatly to the benefit of your listeners wherever you can present it."

■

we honor . . .

May is full of anniversaries for some of the world's greatest thinkers, some of them closely connected with the international rationalist movement:

May 4th, 1825, is the birthday of **Thomas Huxley,** grandfather of Aldous and Julian Huxley. A great biologist and exponent of Darwinism, he was also a prolific writer and lecturer. He served on many government commissions whose reports had a tremendous influence on the intellectual and social development of England.

On May 5th, 1818 **Karl Marx,** founder of Marxism, was born in Trier, Germany. An ardent freethinker from early youth, he coined the phrase in his book attacking Hegel "religion . . . is the opium of the people".

May 14th, 1771 is the anniversary of **Robert Owen.** This celebrated Utopian reformer was an avowed agnostic; his work had a profound influence on the Labor and Co-operative movement in the world.

Next on May's list is **Bertrand Russell** whose birthday falls on May 18th, 1872. His witty and provocative style is presented in close to 50 books of philosophy, fiction and science. This "grand old man" of the freethought movement is admired and loved by all non-comformists. We wish him a happy 85th birthday and hope that he enjoys it in good health.

On May 20th, 1806 the "Saint of Rationalism" was born: **John Stuart Mill.** He ranks with the world's greatest philosophers and economists. In his numerous works he advocated proportional

—(Continued on page 26)

CBS URGED TO AIR CHURCH-STATE ISSUES ON REGULAR PROGRAM BASIS

A "dignified hour of controversy on church-state issues" once a month on national radio and TV networks was suggested yesterday by a predominantly Protestant organization as the "logical solution of the unpleasant battle now raging over freedom of the air for religious criticism."

Glenn L. Archer, executive director of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State, in a letter addressed to the Columbia Broadcasting System deplored the suppression of an address by Father Thurston N. Davis, editor of the Jesuit magazine, **America,** prepared for delivery March 10th on CBS' "Church of the Air," but added that CBS is right in suggesting the need of equal time to offset such a partisan treatment." Archer offered as possible participants with Father Davis in a controversial discussion of church-state issues two leaders of POAU, Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of the Methodist Chuch, and Paul Blanshard, author of **American Freedom and Catholic Power.**

"We feel," said Archer, "that listeners subjected to Father Davis' analysis of the causes of Catholic-Protestant tensions would not get an unbiased conception of the real issues of birth control, Catholic censorship, and the use of public money for parochial schools. The correct solution, we feel, is not suppression, but valid controversy.

"We agree with the National Council of Catholic Men in deploring the cancellation of Father Davis' program on the 'Church of the Air,' but we do not see that the solution suggested by the National Council of Catholic Men is feasible. We suggest that Father Davis be asked to engage in a quiet and constructive two-way discussion of the issues with either or both of two prominent critics of Catholic policy who are identified with our organization, Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, a vice-president of POAU, and Paul Blanshard, author of **American Freedom and Catholic Power,** who is our organization's special counsel. I have been authorized to offer both of these speakers as participants in an hour of honest controversy designed to ventilate the real facts lying behind Catholic-Protestant tensions.

"We believe that such hours of honest controversy, if produced regularly at monthly intervals, would gain an immense and interested audience, and would serve in the long run to promote tolerance and understanding."

Send 25c to POAU., 1633 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington 6, D.C., for Glenn L. Archer's letter to CBS.

"FUTILE ATTEMPT"

Because one of your correspondents questioned the value of religion, I see some very ardent "defenders of the Faith" have quickly come forward in the futile attempt to bolster up the crumbling orthodox fences. There is no question that the Christian religion has had some very definite effects on the life and manners of some of its adherents.

There is the case in point of Peter J. Mayock, age 32, of Norwich, Conn., who by following Scripture literally, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out:" and "if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off," was committed to a hospital for the insane — once for gouging out his eye, and soon after release from the institution, for slicing off his right hand just above the wrist by means of a bolo knife.

Brought to trial, Mayock insisted on his right to practice his religion, which though Jesus-inspired, did not impress the judge too favorably. Perhaps if Mr. Mayock and some of your religious correspondents could take their liquor and religion with a bit more restraint and good taste, a better sobriety of both mind and body might be enjoyed.

Arthur G. Cromwell,
West Lake Rd., Williamson.

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"HOLY"

Leslie Hanscom, reviewing the book, **Pagan Spain by** Richard Wright (Harper) for the New York World Telegram recently, quoted the author:

"For a long time my own Westernness proved a veritable stumbling block to my seeing the truth that stared me in the face. The cold fact was: Spain was not yet even Christian. It had never been converted . . .

"[Yet] all was religion in Spain . . . there was no lay, no secular life. Spain was a holy nation, a sacred state... Even the prostitution, the corruption, the economics — the politics had about them a sacred aura."

—The Churchman.

From the radio address over radio station KWK — **"Ethics as a Religion"**—

by

James F. Hornback, Leader, Ethical Society of St. Louis, Mo.

THE RISE OF RELIGION AND CRIME

To those who are rejoicing over the steady increase in church attendance, membership, publicity, budgets, and building, the latest statistics on crime serve as a sobering contrast. According to figures released by J. Edgar Hoover a couple of weeks ago, (Federal Bureau of Investigation, Sept. 27), major crimes are increasing just as sharply as religion. For the first six months of 1956, crimes such as murder, rape, assault, and auto theft increased by 14.4% over last year. Only robbery, perhaps the least violent of the major crimes, showed a slight decrease.

In other words, crimes of violence — the so-called crimes of passion, brutality, and daring — are on the increase. The impression created by sensational stories in the papers seems to be backed by a sober listing of facts. And we of the Ethical Societies are particularly concerned over the supposed relation between the spiritual beliefs of a nation and the actual behavior of its people. What are some of the forces behind the simultaneous increase of religious activity and violent crime?

The facts are hard to agree upon, first of all, because religious statistics are highly variable. Even the numbers of people mean different things in different religious denominations. Some enroll members by birth or baptism, others wait for "confirmation" or the so-called "age of accountability" in adolescense, and others count only those who make an adult statement of faith and loyalty. Some point with pride to their numbers; others withhold all statistics.

Public opinion polls have added to our knowledge, and sometimes to our confusion, on the subject of religion. Though the latest estimate on church and synagogue membership in the United States runs to 74,000,000 — or nearly 50% of our population — the samples tested by pollsters show that about 95% consider themselves Protestants, Catholics, or Jews, and that 97% believe in some definition of God. Religion in America has never been more popular, or more in control of private agencies and government policy.

In the case of crime, records are somewhat more reliable. But we must remember that crime is a legal definition rather than a moral or spiritual one. The manufacture, sale, and conspicuous use of alcoholic liquors, for instance, was once a crime in this country, however half-heartedly the law was enforced. Today, within stated limits, this is no crime, but a matter of taste, morality, and public health. Our conceptions of morality and crime may, in fact, conflict. The immoral is often permitted by law, and the moral forbidden or ignored by it.

So when we try to match the statistics on crime with those on religion, the results are even more vague. Occasionally a sectarian zealot will claim that only religious orthodoxy can check the inherent tendency in man toward sin and crime. And at the opposite extreme, a free-thinking non-conformist will point to the ironic fact that convicted criminals show a higher degree of religious belief than mild-mannered university professors.

Unfortunately, we have no accurate figures on the religious background and belief of criminals. Most people make up their minds according to their previous philosophies and prejudices.

A few months ago, a sectarian weekly in St. Louis carried a cartoon-graph, purporting to show that juvenile crime is on the upswing because religious education is declining. The fact seems to be that both are on the upswing, whether one is responsible for the other or not. And an intriguing study by a Scandinavian sociologist a few years ago attempted to show that among the religious denominations of the West, some excel in crimes of violence, others in crimes of shrewdness and stealth, and others in diversified crime.

Here and there ,a dedicated sociologist has studied the relation between religion and crime, without forcing the facts. Father Leo

Kalmer, a former penitentiary chaplain at Joliet, Illinois, produced a detailed study called **Crime and Religion,** in which he pointed out that prisoners may sign in as more religious than they really are, in the hope of winning sympathy. Or they may actually repent, even as late as the death chamber, and identify themselves with the chaplain in the public mind. Despite the admitted lack of conclusive evidence, Father Kalmer retained his faith in the power of traditional religion to keep men from criminal careers.

Looking beyond penitentiary crimes to morality in general, the Protestants Hartshorne and May, at Yale Divinity School, produced their classic **Studies in Deceit,** in which they came to the conclusion — after thousands of tests and questionnaires — that there is no apparent relation between religious education and common honesty, between theology and character. The true believer seems no more and no less prone to crime anl immorality, than the man who abstains from religion.

This sobering conclusion, frequently disappointing to religious students of human behavior, has been the central insight of the Ethical Culture movement: Good conduct can be taught as good conduct, in its own warm, human terms, and not as an incidental or even necessary by-product of a particular religion or metaphysical system. The ethical by-product of traditional religions has become our chief concern.

How, then, might an ethical religion deal with the problem of increasing crime? Obviously, hardened criminals are not going to enroll suddenly and in large numbers in Ethical Societies, churches, and other idealistic groups. Nor are the Pachucos and Rock-and-Roll rioters, or the Teddy boys in England, likely to start to Sunday school. A few — through fear, or conviction of sin, or psychiatry, or the influence of a friendly human being — will undergo the sort of change of heart and personality we know as "conversion." Others, though classed as criminals through a slip or two into violence or dishonesty, are normally moral and helpful citizens. The rest must be dealt with by law, and by the increasing band of dedicated professionals — trained lawyers and judges and wardens and parole officers — who try to protect the larger community while giving the "criminal" a chance to change.

But beyond the necessary care and salvage of the current criminal "crop", ethical religion would seek an answer to the social and psychological problems that seem to be making more criminals in this age of religious faith. Is it the decline of religion, or the prevalent type of religion, that makes it difficult to inspire the younger generation?

Ours has been called the "Age of Un-Reason," in contrast to the "Age of Reason" (Tom Paine's famous title) in which our Republic and its democratic faith were founded. Tired of bucking the Hitlers, Mussolinis, and Stalins — and their living successors — and eager to repel all threats against the post-war "American way of Life", we have taken on much of the irrational herd-instinct that characterized the totalitarian enemy. The enemy, in many ways, is within us.

There is an amazing revival of magic, superstition, and group disorder, in a world of material comforts and gadgets. We accept the products of science, but not its ethical philosophy of reasonableness, cooperation, and freedom of thought. Truly, as Robert Sherwood put it in his play, "The Petrified Forest," based upon our Great Depression in the 30's, "Nature has taken the world away from the intellectuals and given it back to the apes." And as the distinguished religious philosopher and Vice-President of India, Radhakrishnan, has put it, "If we believe absurdities, we shall commit atrocities."

The late Dr. Robert Lindmer of Baltimore, who won fame for his psychoanalysis of criminals in Maryland prisons and the federal penitentiary at Lewisburg, Pa., has advanced this explanation of our current wave of juvenile crime. By holding to a sort of gang or group neurosis, a social sickness of the conformist mind, these tough young people have escaped the personal suffering so typical of adolescents in past generations. Instead of turning their normal rebellion against parents and traditions into an inner world of dreams, ideals, art, and invention — as long gen-

erations of adolescents have done — these modern rebels have acted out their rebellion in mob violence and contempt.

For the most part, their parents never disciplined them anyway, never taught them graciousness or self-sacrifice or self-control, for fear of repressing them or hurting their minds with too much thoughtfulness. Their teachers never forced them to read or write, much less to work arithmetic. Their clergymen gave them comforting beliefs instead of moral challenges. These are indeed "Rebels Without a Cause," to quote the theme of Dr. Lindner's book from which a rather sensationalistic motion picture was made. Or perhaps the "cause" of their rebellion is a simple lack of standards, a failure of patents and teachers and clergymen to understand the way in which responsible character is formed.

The psychiatrists have long had a word for self-centered, irresponsible, but physically healthy people. They call them "psychopathic personalities," or "constitutional psychopaths." You know the symptoms. The one who has them does not suffer. The community suffers for him. The symptoms appear daily in our papers and in our court rooms: acts of violence and contempt for law, a complete lack of sympathy for victims, and an apparent absence of remorse, even over being caught and punished. The anti-social act is glorified, and repeated as soon as possible. The only respect and devotion is given to the comrades in crime, especially those who excel.

Dr. Lindner blames what he calls the "lie of adjustment" and "conformity." Even some liberals in recent years have encouraged their chcildren not to be different, not to think too much for themselves, not to develop a haunting conscience or sense of guilt, not to take up with unpopular or idealistic causes. The results are obvious; the most timid and illiberal and "adjusted" group of religious and political conformists on the one hand, and the most brutal and illiberal and "adjusted" group of irreligious and non-political conformists on the other.

Dr. Lindner spells out some of his recommendations in other books, published shortly before his untimely death this year — **The Fifty-Minute Hour,** a series of descriptions of his psychiatric interviews; and **Must You Conform?,** a reassertion of the right and the responsibility for individual thought and action. Social service and "positive thinking" may make conformity easier to take, but they do not correct the basic dangers of mass-thinking and mass-action.

Only a religion — or a philosophy of life, if you prefer to call it that — that puts freedom of thought above mass-thinking, and the rule of reason above primitive impulse, can teach respect for the individual. Only such a humane faith can give the individual respect for himself, and for others. Such a faith we of the Ethical Society aspire to learn, and to teach through free exchange with one another.

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We Honor . . .

— (Continued from page 22)

representation in government, the emancipation of women, development of labor organizations and co-operatives.

The death of **Victor Hugo** occurred on May 22nd, 1885 bringing to an end one of the most fascinating careers as poet, novelist, politician, secularist and member of the French parliament. He exposed the hypocrisy of the clergy in his many books and helped to bring about the complete separation of church and state in France.

May 28th, 1723 we celebrate the birthday of **Paul Baron d'Holbach,** one of the Encyclopedists. A clear-cut opponent of Christianity and all forms of religion, he influenced his fellow friends Diderot, Helvetius, Condorcet and Rousseau.

In 1778, on May 30th, **Voltaire** died in his beloved Paris. A towering genius, a fighter for justice against all odds, the nemesis of the Roman church, his battle cry "Crush the Infamous" is as apropos today as it was in his days. Voltaire will live forever in the hearts of all freethinkers. McGaulay said of him: "Of all the intellectual weapons that have been wielded by man, the most terrible was the mockery of Voltaire. — Bigots and Tyrants who had never been moved by the wailings and cursing of millions, turned pale at his name."

In addition to the books reviewed and listed in this issue we can supply any book published in the USA and abroad. We can also handle your magazine subscriptions.

This is a service for our readers; any operating surplus will be used for the benefit of the "American Rationalist".

Make your checks, money orders, etc., payable to "Book Service, American Rationalist" and send them with your order to 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

SO RICH, YET SO POOR
The Paradox Of Plenty
By Thomas Henry Gibbins

A powerful "expose" of what's wrong in American economic life; written in a style that any American can understand. It is fundamentally based on factual data, which can be verified from authentic sources.

Opinions of the writer and other quotes are minimized. His coinage of a new slang word "Cuckooodoodleum" is defined by him as "Anything that tends to humbug or deceive the people."

Some other definitions are: "Any social system which effects its distribution of goods and services by means of a system of trade or commerce, based on commodity valuation and employing any form of debt tokens (money) constitutes a **Price System.**" "Money is the Nothing, you get for Something, before you get Anything."

The author points out how proud we are collectively, about the American standard of living; yet at the same time there is a feeling of uncertainty, that **fear** of tomorrow, will there be War, or another Depression?

We Americans are the targets for more Business and Political pleading, persuasion and urging, than are the people of any other nation on earth; beguiled by catch phrases, i.e. "There is always room at the top."

If spending for goods and services does not keep up with increased production, you have slow downs and finally shut downs in Industry and a general stagnation of business, resulting in widespread unemployment, which means less money in the hands of Consumers to continue b u y i n g, thus worsening the condition as each cycle continues. This is the result of the Price System.

The author shows the development of this System from Plymouth Rock until the present time — the struggle to get control and ownership, by the few, restricting the flow of goods and services by profit taking, thus curtailing our tremendous power of production.

He also points out that "There is a **way,** a scientific method, which will give you more freedom and material things for better living than you ever dreamed of. And it will be available to all Americans, not just a part of them. There is just **one right** you will lose, in fact, all will lose it: "The right to exploit and chisel your fellowman and his right to do likewise to you." It is important that you thoroughly understand **what we have now,** what causes it, and why it is that way.

"SO RICH, YET SO POOR," was written for the express purpose of pointing out and enlightening those who do not already know (and there seems to be many who do not) the facts and failings of the Price System.

This book should be a "must have" for even those that know, due to its valuable reference on statistics alone. **And all for a dollar and a half.** What a gem!

Eugene H. Hoffmann

170 pages, cardboard, $1.65 incl. handling charge.

"MAN, TIME, AND FOSSILS"
By Ruth Moore

Have you read that Darwinism is outmoded? Of course that depends on just what is meant by the term, but his belief in natural selection has been vindicated. Have you wondered how a wide range of colors in a certain species of plant or in human skin can be accounted for by Mendelian laws? Have you read references to fluorine dating or to ancient giant races of

protoman and wished to learn more details?

Miss Moore has written an excellent history of the science of evolution. Her system of writing of the work of each important scientist in the field in chronological order not only stimulates the interest but shows how each step in the progress of evolution theory was to answer certain questions that that naturally arose. She gives biographical notes that humanize, but her aim is to teach the development of ideas. Summaries are frequent.

While reading the last sections one should remember that the "Piltdown Man" was finally declared a hoax, late 1953, and that the trend toward dating **homo sapiens** as a development of the last 50,000 years has abruptly changed to a trend dating him back several hundred thousand years.

Evolution is really a group of sciences that are now rapidly accumulating evidence. A general reader can hardly keep up. This is all the more reason that one should sieze an oportunity, such as this book, to get a good general picture of how species appear and change.

Harry E. Mongold

(Alfred A. Knopf, 1953, $5.75. Cloth, 411 pp., incl. bibliog., plus index and plates.)

"THE NUN'S STORY"
By Kathryn Hulme

—And—

"I LEAP OVER THE WALL"
By Monica Baldwin

Two books have come out recently which tie in with the New Reformation. Just as the revolt of Luther forced the Catholic Church to bring out reforms within its own organization, these two books will perhaps influene a reform within the convents. These books are "The Nun's Story," by Kathryn Hulme, and "I Leap Over the Wall," by Monica Baldwin, niece of Britain's former prime minister.

Both stories concern former nuns who received a special dispensation from the Pope to leave the convent and the life of a nun, to return to the outside.

Although "The Nun's Story" reads like fiction, and is written in the third person, it is true in all essentials. Of the two books, this one should be read first, for it gives a more vivid description of life in the convent. It is the story of a Belgian girl, Gaby Van der Mal, who becomes Sister Luke, and of her terrific struggle to keep the vow of humility. You live with her in the convent, and hear her ask again and again, "Is this Gods' way? Why? Why?" You are kept on edge when she is a nurse in the insane asylum, and you grow to love Africa with her, when she is sent as a nursing nun to the Congo. You feel her discouragement, when at last, in war-torn Belgium, she admits to herself that she can never reach the type of humility the other nuns seem to have attained. This story ends when she re-enters the world, disillusioned but still a Catholic.

To me the most outstanding episode in the book is when the Mother Superior suggests that Sister Luke deliberately fail in the oral tests, during her nurses' training course, "to prove her humility." Sister Luke refuses, and when she passes with the highest grade of all the nuns, the Mother Superior says with a sigh, "The congregation will profit . . . But your failure would have been a gift to God."

In "I Leap Over the Wall," Miss Baldwin dwells mostly on her adventures after she left the convent. Many of the episodes remind us of Rip Van Winkle, and how changed he found the world after his long sleep. Her prior life brought into focus by

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means of flash-backs, and by comparing her life now and then.

The nuns in the convent were taught to practice self brain-washing. That is, they were to erase all memories and images, and all thoughts except about God from their minds. As a result, even eight years after Miss Baldwins' exodus, she was still unobservant and forgetful.

It is hard to realize that most of the rules of the Order of the Nuns to which Miss Baldwin belonged were laid down by the ascetics of the 14th century. Although Miss Baldwin tries to play down her distate for convent life, I am sure that any young girl who reads, "I Leap Over the Wall" would find the description of life in a convent so dreary that she would never again speculate about being a nun.

It is amazing that it took Miss Baldwin ten years to discover that she is not suited for the life of a nun, and eighteen more years before she made the break for freedom.

Nan Mongold

"The Nun's Story", cloth-bound, $4.00.
"I Leap Over the Wall", paper-bound 45c.

•

Ed. comment: The signature of Florence Van Swearengen was omitted from the book review of "Letter to F.D.R." in March issue.

•

COMMENTS ON CROMWELL'S SPEECH

Dear Mr. Cromwell:

Please stand still while I pin this solid gold medal on you for your excellent talk, "WHY I DO NOT BELIEVE IN GOD" up there in Marblehead, Mass., as reprinted in "AMERICAN RATIONALIST" (which I get). If not literally then at least figuratively. I see you have a singularly sound and thoroly rational viewpoint, for which please consider your hand heartly shaken by me with all sincerity and friendliness. You did a most commendable job in itself and a great servict to Rationalism and Freethot, I'm sure. I subscribe to your views and ideas 100%, sir, but could never express them so aptly. I've sent for a few extra copies of your talk, to place in what tver intellectually "hungry" hands I can.

Andrew Vena, Penn.

•

Oscar Wilde: The old believe everything, the middle-aged suspect everything, the young know everything.

WALTER HOOPS

At Random . . .

The Darwin anniversary committee plans to retrace the round-the-world voyage of Charles Darwin, which helped the naturalist develop his theory of evolution. The voyage is planned for 1958, the centennial of the year Darwin's book on evolution was published.

* * *

During Nehru's visit to this country, his daughter, Mme. Indira Gandhi, said to reporters: "I don't believe in temples, churches or mosques, but one should have an aim in life which is above one's personal needs and desires."

* * *

Only 17% of American adults could say in 1955 that they were currently reading a book, as compared with 55% in Great Britain.

* * *

One young lady to another: I do not know how the Russians do it, saying Niet all the time. After several vodkas, I always Yes.

* * *

The American Seamen's Friend Society, 550 West 20th Street, New York, N.Y., is appealing for books. Several of our readers have told us that they have sent book parcels and hope that others will do likewise.

* * *

Some experts and givers of advice always remind me of the bottom half of a double boiler — they let off a lot of steam but don't know what's cooking.

* * *

The presses used by the "League of the Godless" are printing also new Russian bibles for the Orthodox Church. These books do not carry the usual censorship note and can be purchased in New York for $10.00.

* * *

Priests in Ahmedabad, India have formed a union to fight fir higher wages and improved working conditions. Suggested slogan for picket: Don't listen to this preacher. He is a scab.

* * *

Nine year old poetess Minou Drouet of France had an audience with the Pipe and is quoted to have told him: "I have gone into many churches looking for God, but all I find are stained-glass windows and pillars." What the Pope answered has not been recorded.

* * *

Dictum of Communist Secret Police henchman, Kotley of Hungary: "No obstinacy exists that we cannot overcome — no spirit that we cannot break."

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Memo from Ben W. Parnell

Items from the Congressional Record, 1957

F L A S H ! !

The bill, **House of Concurrent Resolution 90,** which designates February 3, 1957, as "Chaplain's Day" (or also as "Dorchester Day") pased both the House and Senate on Jan. 30, 1957. For details see the **Congressional Record** for aJnuary 30, 1957 (No. 17), as follows:

"Dorchester Day", page 1155.

"Honoring the Chaplains and Men Who Died on the U.S.S. 'Dorchester'," page 1202.

"Dorchester Sinking", page D53.

"Dorchester Sinking", page D55.

Also see related items (Petitions, etc.) on pp. 1119, A613, A621, 1231 (Petitions 65 and 66), and 1237 in this and succeeding issues of the Record.

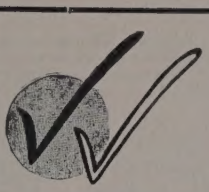
Other items from the RECORD:

H. R. 3993 (Nimtz, Ind.), p. 1107, and **H. R. 4099** (Fino, N.Y.), p. 1211, both provide for the issuance of a postage stamp in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Knights of Columbus. Both bills referred to the Committee on Post Office & Civil Service.

S. Con. Res. 9 (Bridges, N.H., for himself and Sen. Cotton, N.H.), p. 1126 favors recognition of the Altar of the Nation (located at the Cathedral of the Pines, in Rindge, N.H.) as a national shrine. To the Committee on Interior & Insular Affairs. Several Petitions, Memorials, etc., have previously appeared in the Record, also wanting to make this "Altar" a national shrine.

On page A568-9: "Why I am an Anti-Intellectual" by Medford Evans (inserted in the **Record** by Sen. Styles Bridges, N.H.) is a bold attempt to tie all intellectuals and liberalism directly to Communism.

Note:— Regarding the "Chaplains" or "Dorchester" first mentioned in this memo, it is well to note that although Congress has been swamped with Petitions, Memorials, etc., requesting that this be made a permanent holiday in **every** year, the bill actually passed provides for observance of the day **in this year only!** Ben Parnell.



CHECK *and* DOUBLE CHECK *by* 'CHEKA'

STARTING THE SECOND YEAR

Yes, this is issue No. One, Volume Two. One year of Rationalist progress is behind us . . . and we have started on our second milestone. Our magazine didn't die after the first issue, nor the second. It came out regularly and finished its first year of publication with high colors. Our readers family is getting bigger and bigger. If a Rationalist or Freethinker gets a sample copy of the AMERICAN RATIONALIST into his hand, he can't do anything else but to subscribe for the magazine. That is how much it is liked. Now, dear friends, if you want to do your bit in helping the magazine grow, pass the AR to your friends or send us some addresses so we can mail them a sample copy. Let us all pitch in and get the two thousand readers for the AMERICAN RATIONALIST.

IT IS NOT TOO LATE . . .

You may have missed sending in your birthday greetings, but it is not too late. Maybe a little late, but even a belated birthday greeting to your favored magazine is better then not sending any at all. So, write your letter, enclose that spare dollar that you was putting on aside for this purpose and mail it to our dear "AR".

DON'T FORGET THE AR REPRINTS!

Just reminding everybody that during the first year of our existence we have published thousands of reprints of various articles that have appeared in the pages of this publication (see adv.) Get a supply for yourself, they will help you pass the Rationalist viewpoints and ideas to your friends. You will do your share in building your movement.

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Your subscription to the AR probably expired. Don't leave it lapse. It is the only way to have a guarantee to get every issue of the magazine regularly and on time. Take care of this importnt matter today.

IN CLOSING . . .

With wishes to our ever growing Rationalist family that worked so hard during this first year to make our magazine "The American Rationalist" a big success. Thank you all.

Victor Cejka.

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